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EREMIAH IN THE
DUNGEON.

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JEREMIAH IN THE DUNGEON;

Four Discourses

DELIVERED AT LONDON IN THE YEAR 1807.

ALSO

A DISCOURSE ADDRESSED TO YOUNG PERSONS;

AND

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED ON THE DAY OF THE WRITER'S ORDINATION.

BY THE LATE

REV. JAMES HODSON,
MINISTER OF DUDLEY CHAPEL, DENMARK STREET, SOHO.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

A Biographical Notice of the Author.

LONDON:

J. S. HODSON, 22, PORTUGAL STREET,
LINCOLN'S INN.

1853.

180. 3. 217.



LONDON:
J. & HODSON, PRINTER, 22, PORTUGAL STREET,
LINCOLN'S INN.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE.

THE writer of these Discourses may scarcely have been heard of in the present generation; but there is reason to hope that the *name* will long continue in connexion with the New Church through the medium of his posterity, which extends to the fourth generation, now being brought up in these truths. He was ordained in 1805, and was minister to a Society of the Church, meeting for public worship in Dudley Court, Denmark Street, Soho, from the year 1805 to 1812. The members forming this Society had separated from one meeting at York Street, St. James' Square, under the ministry of the late Rev. J. Proud, and first held their meetings in Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, afterwards in Brownlow Street, Holborn, and eventually settled in Dudley Court.

During the time that he ministered to this Society, "He enjoyed," says the Editors of the *Intellectual Repository*, "in the highest degree the affection and confidence of his flock.... His congregation being neither numerous nor rich, he received no salary; but he himself contributed liberally on every occasion to the exigencies of the church."

His introduction to a knowledge of the Writings of Swedenborg is thus stated by Mr. Noble, (who was a member of his congregation,) in the Sermon which he delivered on the occasion of the writer's decease:—"He had been from early youth a diligent student of the Holy Word;" and "the consequences of such early study, and an attention to religious principle, were such as cannot but be regarded, in the present age of spiritual blindness, as very extraordinary. It was given him to see, from the Scriptures alone, the Sole Divinity of the Lord: and he had written a Treatise in defence of this essential New Church Doctrine, under the title of

Jesus Christ the True God, and Sole Object of Supreme Adoration, before he had seen any of the New Church Writings. Having issued, in 1786, proposals for the publication of this work, (which appeared in 1787,) copies fell into the hands of some of the members of the New Church Society then existing in London, and two gentlemen were deputed to wait upon him to inquire if he was acquainted with the Writings of Swedenborg? which he was not; but upon their being introduced to him, he received them gladly, and never afterwards doubted but that their Author was the messenger of the Lord's Second Advent." Besides the work above mentioned, which passed into a second edition in 1799, he published a volume of *Sermons on the Israelitish Bondage and Deliverance*; a pamphlet entitled *The Young Christian's Introduction to a Knowledge of his God and Saviour Jesus Christ*; and several single Sermons. His great delight was to endeavour to instil the truth into the minds of young people and children; and one of his efforts in behalf of the latter, entitled *Dame Partlett's Farm*, written for and published by John Harris, St. Paul's Church Yard, may be deemed singularly successful, as it has passed through many editions, both in this country and in America; and several hundred thousand copies of it have been sold. He also published two small volumes of Poetry, partly original, but principally selected; called *The Bouquet*.

He was one of the Editors, and a regular contributor, both of Prose and Poetry, to the New Church Periodical called *The Aurora*, commenced in 1779, and the following Poem extracted from it, is from his pen,—

"JESUS WEPT."—*John xi. 35.*

" Go tune your harps, and wake the *sigh*,
Which oft is breathed we know not why ;
For 'tis not grief alone, or pain,
That causes this *Æolian strain* :
Unknown its source—yet all confess
'Tis something which we can't express.

To age or state 'tis not confined—
The lofty or the humble mind;
For each will join in sad reply,
'All who have breath find cause to sigh!'

"The babe, just enter'd into life,
Sweet pledge of love, and void of strife;
This soother of its mother's care,
Source both of ecstasy and fear,
All playful at the breast will lie,
Then turn its face and heave a sigh!—
The youth, when sports dispel all fear,
Will cease from play to cry, 'Oh dear!'
And when to riper years matured,
To pleasure or to toil inured,
Still do we hear the same sad moan,
In softer sigh or deeper groan!

"But can that mind where Love divine
Has deign'd in radiant beams to shine;
Where Truth has spread her silver page,
And Goodness fix'd her golden age;
Where Peace, all-lovely, fills the soul,
And gently reigns with soft control:—
Say must *this Christian* mind still cry,
'All who have breath find cause to sigh!'

"Alas! howe'er advanced in state,
To mind most humble—love most great;
Though Peace sits smiling on his brow,
And gently fans her olive bough;
Though Truth has waved her banner high,
And reach'd the portals of the sky;
Though Goodness, Mercy, Love inspire
His soul with pure celestial fire;—
Still this will be the *Christian's* daily cry,
When *Jesus wept* who shall forbear to sigh?"

In 1808 he was called upon to visit Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where the doctrines had become known, and those who professed them were desirous of forming themselves into a Society of the New Church. He preached there and in the neighbourhood several times; he organized the Society, administered the Sacraments, and ordained the person presented by the Society to be its future minister. Although the results which shortly after followed were

by no means satisfactory, yet the visit may have sown the seeds from which has sprung the respectable society which now exists in this large and important town.

The Intellectual Repository for the New Church was commenced with the year 1812, to be published quarterly; and the writer had prepared to contribute to its pages,—some articles for the purpose having been found amongst his papers: but he was removed to the spiritual world on the 16th of April of that year, in the 59th year of his age. In the 3rd No. of this Periodical, which contains his Obituary, is also given the following Poem,—the only contribution he made to the work; but since his decease many papers from his pen have appeared, commencing with the year 1819, under the signature of “Tepidus.”

“ON FAME.

“Twas night! sweet silence reign'd around,
No breeze disturb'd the billow's breast,
The crystal dew-drop pearl'd the ground,
The sky in sparkling gems was dress'd;
When by the Isis' classic tide,
The young Eugenius musing came;
And oft with ardent wish he sigh'd
To shine among the sons of Fame.
Enwrapp'd in thought, his lucid eye
He cast upon the heavenly blue;
When swiftly through the yielding sky
A meteor's short-lived glories flew.
He paused; and strove with lab'ring thought
To draw some moral from its flight;
When lo! a voice with music fraught,
Broke through the silence of the night,
‘Twas sweeter far than Handel's fire,
E'en when with rapture's voice he sings;
‘Twas like the music of a lyre,
When a bright Seraph sweeps the strings;
‘Eugenius! soft the minstrel cried,
‘Behold you not the Meteor's glare?
‘Did you not see its gaudy pride,
‘Which vanish'd soon in empty air?

' From it learn this useful story,
 ' (For your instruction know it came)
 ' All the warrior's boasted glory,—
 ' The bard's renown,—the sage's fame,—
 ' That fame to which your soul aspires—
 ' The proudest fame which earth displays,—
 ' Though it should live till time expires,
 ' Is but at best a Meteor's blaze.
 ' But seek to tread the paths of truth,
 ' Then heav'nly joys your hopes shall find,
 ' For trust me, heav'nly joys, fond youth,
 ' Are worthy an immortal mind.'"

The writer was succeeded in his office as Minister of the Society in Dudley Court by the Rev. Dr. Churchill, by whom the following lines were written, and appeared in the *Intellectual Repository* for January, 1814:—

" SWEET are the contemplations which attend
 The placid moments of the good man's end;
 Sweet is the hope that bids the Christian rise,
 In blest extatic vision to the skies;
 And sweet the thoughts that soothe the troubled breast,
 And lull our sorrows and our cares to rest.
 Suppress the sigh, profane no more with grief
 The welcome hour which gave his soul relief.
 As, like a shock of corn full ripe, he goes
 To the pure haven of secure repose,
 Enraptured seraphs greet him, ' Brother come !'
 And lingering wait to waft his spirit home.
 Wisdom, who fill'd thy breast with heavenly lore,
 And taught, with upward wing, thy thoughts to soar;
 Virtue, whose deathless image lived enshrined
 Within the sacred temple of thy mind;
 And Charity, soft smiling thro' her tears;
 And meek Religion, tenant of the spheres,
 Thy pious labours and thy love approve,
 And bear thee, Honduras, to the realms above.
 There shalt thou live, with joys celestial crown'd,
 Where honour, peace, and happiness abound."

In the October of the same year a tribute to his memory was presented to the widow in the shape of a handsome Silver Salver; bearing an Inscription of which the following is a copy;

To **Mrs. HARRIET HODSON**,
this Salver is presented,
Oct^r. 1814,
by the Congregation of the Lord's New Church lately worshiping in
DUDLEY CHAPEL,
in Testimony of respect for the Memory
of her late Husband, their esteemed Friend and Pastor,
The REV. JAMES HODSON,
whose affectionate, edifying, and disinterested Labours,
and amiable and inoffensive Conversation,
endeared him to every Member of his Flock;
while by his Doctrine he instructed them,
and by his example led them, in the Way to that Heaven,
which it is their best consolation to know,
he is gone to enjoy.

Mr. GERARDIN
— BRANT
— NOBLE } *Trustees.*

Committee.

Mr. SERVANTÉ
— WILSON
— GRAYSON

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— W. MANTON
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S. ESSEX. Secretary.

JEREMIAH IN THE DUNGEON.

SERMON I.

Jeremiah, xxxviii. 6.

Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah, the son of Hammelch, that was in the court of the prison; and they let down Jeremiah with cords: And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire: So Jeremiah sunk into the mire.

It is well known by the members of the Lord's New Church, that the Word of God, as to its literal sense, is written entirely by correspondences; that is, by such things as represent and signify the spiritual things of heaven and of the church; and that this was done on account of the internal sense, which is in every part of it, and consequently for the sake of heaven; inasmuch as the heavenly inhabitants do not understand the Word according to the literal sense, which is natural, but according to the internal sense, which is spiritual. The members of this Church are also convinced that there *is* this internal sense in every part of the Word of God, although we may not be able to discern at all times its exact interpretation.

But notwithstanding that we may not be able, in all cases, to discover the particular correspondence or spiritual import of every passage, we may in general discern sufficient to render it applicable to our spiritual instruction; and even if we see no opening of its *spiritual* contents, we may in most cases derive some *moral* advantage from a literal application thereof to our own circumstances and situations. Neither is it to be expected that our illuminated Scribe, even in his voluminous writings, can have given us the precise correspondence of every passage in the holy Scriptures;—he has left a considerable portion of them for us to exercise our understandings upon, when en-

lightened by a general knowledge of the doctrine of correspondences, under a spiritual influence from heaven.

The history of which our text is a part, contains one of those subjects from which we may obtain much instruction, both in a moral and spiritual view, although we may not be able to open it according to its exact and full internal correspondence; for the account of the external sufferings only of Jeremiah must inspire us with that spirit of charity, compassion, and benevolence, which are peculiar to the doctrines of the Lord's New Church.

It appears that in the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah, when Jerusalem was besieged by the Chaldeans, the prophet Jeremiah, by direction of the Lord, recommended to Zedekiah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to give up the city to the Chaldeans, since it would most assuredly fall into their hands in the end. But Zedekiah having obtained assistance from Pharaoh, king of Egypt, the Chaldeans raised the siege for that time; wherefore the Jews ridiculed Jeremiah, because his prophecy respecting the overthrow of their city, was not fulfilled. In confirmation, however, of the Lord's former denunciation against this corrupted city, the prophet declares (chap. xxxvii. v. 9, 10, &c.), "Thus saith the Lord, Deceive not yourselves, saying, The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us; for they shall *not* depart. For though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained but wounded men among them, yet should they rise up every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire." Having delivered this dreadful sentence against Jerusalem, the prophet, in order to escape the general destruction of the city, "went forth out of Jerusalem to go into the land of Benjamin, to slip away (it is said) from thence in the midst of the people;" but he was seized by Irijah, the captain of the ward, as a rebel falling away to the Chaldeans, and carried before the princes of the people, who smote him, and cast him into prison. Zedekiah, the king, however, liberated him from the close confinement unto which the princes had condemned him, and secretly sent for him to inquire, "Is there any Word from the Lord?" The prophet, faithful to his commission, notwithstanding the personal danger that awaited him, boldly answered, "There is; for thou shalt be delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon." In consequence of this interview with the king, Jeremiah obtained

some remission of his sentence, and instead of being a close prisoner, was admitted into the court of the prison, and a daily allowance of provision made to him.

According to his prophecy, the next year the king of Babylon again besieged the city; and Jeremiah, desirous of saving the lives of his countrymen, earnestly entreated Zedekiah to give up the city, and thereby spare the lives of the inhabitants. "Where," says he, "are *now* your prophets that prophesied unto you, saying, The king of Babylon shall *not* come against you nor against this land? Thus saith the Lord, This city shall surely be given into the hands of the king of Babylon's army, which shall take it." Wherefore, "thus saith the Lord, He that remaineth in this city shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence; but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live; for he shall have his life for a prey and shall live."

This bold invitation to revolt, as might be expected, gave great offence to the princes of the court, and to those who were of opinion that the Chaldeans would again be repulsed; and notwithstanding they acknowledged Jeremiah to be a prophet of the *Lord*, yet they considered him as an enemy to the *state*, and consequently they required his destruction. "Therefore the princes said unto the king, We beseech thee, let this man be put to death: for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of the people, but the hurt. Then Zedekiah the king said, Behold, he is in your hand; for the king is not he that can do anything against you. Then (according to the text) took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah, the son of Hammehlech, that was in the court of the prison; and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire. So Jeremiah sunk in the mire."

Thus, if we attend to the natural life of the prophet Jeremiah, from his entrance into the prophetic mission, until the conclusion of his history, as recorded in the book bearing his name, we shall not find that any of the prophets underwent such dreadful external sufferings as he did. Although, when "the Word of the Lord first came to him, the Lord said unto him, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the

kingdoms, to root out, to pull down, and to destroy, to throw down, to build, and to plant;" yet none of these things *literally* came to pass; but he might truly say of himself *personally*, what he did of the Lord and of the church representatively, "I am the man who hath seen affliction by the rod of His wrath. He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light. Surely against *me* is He turned; He turneth His hand against me all the day." And it may be observed, that all *his* sufferings appear to have been occasioned by his zeal for the Lord's cause—for protesting against and prophesying the destruction of a rebellious nation; and for "speaking the Word of the Lord faithfully." So that it is not by a profession of religion—it is not by being appointed to see visions, or being "ordained a prophet unto the nations," that we are exempt from external troubles, or the persecution of our spiritual enemies! Jeremiah, however, as just observed, was a *representative* character,—in the internal sense, of the Lord's church, and in the supreme sense, of the Lord Himself. By the peculiar manner in which he was appointed to the prophetic mission, was signified, that the Lord would Himself be born in this world, in order that He might teach all men divine truth; —that from His Divine principle He would teach the truths and goods of the church, and that He would destroy the evils and falses; that the truths of every good were given them through the Word; but that they perverted them, whence arose evils and falses of every kind against the truths of the church, and hence arose a contrary worship;—that the Lord would admit them to fight against Him, by which they would be subdued, because the Divine principle itself is in the Lord.

In the chapter whence the text is taken, in the internal sense, is shewn, that the church, or those of the church who have not been already vastated, shall be so;—that they of the perverted church would still remain obstinate in perverting the doctrine from the Word, and in defiling it;—that the remaining truths which were not wholly falsified would nevertheless be mingled with falses; and that if it shall pervert them any longer they will inevitably perish; but that if the remaining truths should not be so perverted, they will not perish.

Such is the general internal meaning of this chapter. In the particular passage selected, by Jeremiah being let down

with *cords* into the dungeon, is signified the state *from* which the church was fallen,—cords and curtains signifying spiritual things from a celestial origin; and by the dungeon into which he was cast, is signified the state *into* which the church was fallen, and consequently those who are immersed in the corporeal sensual principle, thus in mere thick darkness concerning truths and goods, because not in the faculty of perceiving. Such was the Jewish church at that time; being fallen into all kinds of evil and false; and they who are in evils of life cannot be in illustration as to the truths of faith: they may, indeed, be in a state of *confirmation*; that is, they may be able to confirm the doctrinals of their church, which is that of faith separate from charity, even with skill and ingenuity; but they cannot *see* whether what they confirm be true or not. Hence we are taught, that “He who is in evil as to life, is in the false of his evil, and does not *believe* the truth howsoever he knows it; indeed, he *supposes* that he believes, but he is deceived; and that he does not believe will be given him to know in the other life, when his perceptive principle is reduced to agreement with his will principle, in which case he will deny, hold in aversion, and reject the truth, and will acknowledge for truth what is contrary, which is the false.”—A. C. 7950.

Such was the state represented by Jeremiah being cast into the dungeon. There being no water in it, but mire, into which the prophet sunk, signifies that at that time there was no good in the church, and hence that truths were dissipated; for *mire* signifies scientifics inapplicable and impure, also a life defiled with evils and falses; and *water*, of which there was none in the dungeon, signifies truth purifying and restoring.

Jeremiah being thus plunged by his enemies into what they thought inevitable destruction, was not, however, forsaken of the Lord. As the prophet himself acknowledges, “I called upon Thy name, O Lord, out of the low dungeon. Thou hast heard my voice; Thou drewest near in the day I called upon Thee; Thou saidst, Fear not. O Lord, Thou hast pleaded the cause of my soul, Thou hast redeemed my life.” Therefore we read, that “when Ebed-melech, the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which was in the king’s house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon,” he was moved with compassion at the punishment so unjustly inflicted on this faithful prophet, and went boldly to the king, then sitting in public, “in the

gate of Benjamin," and applied for his release, saying, "My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon, and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is, for there is no more bread in the city. Then the king commanded Ebed-melech, the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jeremiah out of the dungeon, before he die."—Thus it will be seen that the Lord raised up an unexpected friend, a stranger, of a different country and complexion.

From the literal account, then, of Jeremiah's sufferings, we learn that the faithful servants of the Lord—those who, in the midst of a faithless and perverse generation, dare attack the vices and corruptions of the age, and "speak the Word of the Lord faithfully," are not to expect a life free from anxiety, trouble, and persecutions. Yet, however great the troubles and persecutions may be which they have to endure from *such* cause, if, like Abimelech, they act from "the integrity of their hearts," we shall still find the declaration of the Psalmist literally verified, "Never yet saw I the righteous forsaken;" in for all our trials and temptations, the Lord will most assuredly send relief, and that at the most seasonable time, and He will never leave nor forsake those that trust in Him. In the example of Jeremiah we see that although even the princes of the court and the heads of the Jewish nation conspired against the prophet, and besought the king Zedekiah that he might be put to death, on the pretence that he discouraged the army and disheartened the inhabitants of Jerusalem; yet the Lord always raised up some friend in behalf of the prophet, or pointed out some means by which he escaped the machinations of his enemies. Thus in the chapter preceding that whence our text is taken, we find that when Jeremiah endeavoured to escape out of the city whose destruction he foresaw and had foretold; though he was seized by the captain of the ward, and cast by the princes into a dungeon, where, from the famine which prevailed, and the confusion of the city, he might probably have been neglected or forgotten, and thereby have perished with hunger, yet the Lord raised him up a friend even in the king against whom he prophesied; who released him from his close confinement, "and commanded that they should commit Jeremiah to the *court* of the prison (where he would not be in such danger of being neglected), and that they should give him daily

a piece of bread out of the bakers' street, until all the bread in the city was spent."

But we must not draw so erroneous a conclusion as to suppose that Jeremiah underwent all these sufferings *merely* because he was a prophet of the Lord ; for notwithstanding his *religion* (if we may so speak), or his zeal for the Lord's Church, was the apparent cause of his external sufferings, yet we may rest assured that he would not have been so afflicted had not his own personal state required such trials, in order to effect his regeneration ; for it is a certain truth, which the prophet himself owns, that the Lord "doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men ;" and whatever external events or circumstances may prove the *apparent* cause of trouble to any or each of us—whether of a private nature, or by a zeal for religion, our country, or our sovereign—these are only the means or instruments appointed or permitted by the Lord to bring upon us those troubles which are necessary for our purification and consequent regeneration. If we consider our sufferings, of whatever kind they may be, in any other view, we claim *merit* for them, and thus deceive ourselves, besides being disappointed in the end proposed.

Considering, therefore, every trouble and affliction which we endure as the necessary chastisement of that God, who "scourgeth every son whom He receiveth," let us bow ourselves in humble submission at his fatherly correction, pray to Him out of the deep dungeon into which our iniquities have plunged us, and turn from every evil as being a sin against Him ; and then, "though He cause grief, He will yet have compassion ;" though "our persecutors are swifter than the eagles of the heaven ;"—though "they pursue us in the mountains, and lay wait for us in the wilderness ;" yet "our Redeemer is strong, the Lord of Hosts is His name ; He shall thoroughly plead our cause," that He may "uphold us with His free spirit, and restore unto us the joy of His salvation."

SERMON II.

Jeremiah, xxxviii. 6.

Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah, the son of Hammelech, that was in the court of the prison; and they let down Jeremiah with cords: And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire: So Jeremiah sunk in the mire.

It is a truth which has been made known to us by the messenger of the Lord's Second Advent, consequent upon the opening of the internal sense of the Word of God, that *all* the persons and historical circumstances mentioned throughout the Sacred Scriptures, are representative of the Lord's Church, of the state and progress of man's regeneration, and, supremely, of the Lord Himself, with respect to the glorification of His Humanity, and consequent subjection of the hells and redemption of the human race.—The prophet Jeremiah, however, is perhaps one of the most striking instances of this truth, of any character mentioned in the Sacred Records; because the general circumstances attending his history—the peculiar manner of his being ordained a prophet—"the Word of the Lord which came to him" on that occasion—the apparently unmerited sufferings which he endured; and especially the melancholy writings called *The Lamentations of Jeremiah*; are such evident testimonies of the whole bearing an illusion to things of an internal nature that "he who runneth may read."

With respect to the natural history of this suffering prophet, his life appears to have been directly contrary to the promise made to him by the Lord on his ordination to the prophetic mission; for he informs us, in the first chapter of this book, "the Word of the Lord came unto me saying, Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee: I gave thee a prophet unto the nations." And upon his endeavouring to excuse himself on account of inability, the Lord appears to have encouraged him to enter upon the office by very great promises: "Be not

afraid of their faces ; for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord...See I have *this day* set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant."—Now this must all have been spoken *figuratively* and in allusion to his spiritual state ; for instead of a fulfilment of this elevated station according to the letter, the prophet complains bitterly, " I, the man, have seen affliction by the rod of His wrath. He hath led me and brought me into darkness but not into light. Surely against me is He turned ; He turneth His hand all the day. My flesh and my skin hath He made old, He hath broken my bones. He hath builded against me, and compassed me with gall and travail. He hath hedged me about that I cannot get out, He hath made my chain heavy."—Yet " God is not a man that He should lie, neither the son of man, that He should repent."

The sufferings of Jeremiah, however, appear to have been both internal and external, both private and public, or individually and in his prophetic character ; and we may trace through his writings many of those states which the regenerate pass through on account of their darkness as to the dealings of the Divine Providence, particularly in that which the Psalmist describes, when he says, " I was envious at the foolish ; I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death : but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men ; neither are they plagued like men." This is a state which the mind is very apt to get into, when it is encompassed with trouble after it has entered upon a religious course, because the evil spirits are anxious to insinuate that nothing is to be *gained* by such a life, for those who make no religious profession have much greater enjoyment even of the blessings of Providence. Thus Jeremiah complains, " Righteous art Thou, O Lord, when I plead with Thee : Yet let me *talk* with Thee of Thy judgments. Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper ? Wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously ? Thou hast planted *them*, yea, *they* have taken root : They grow, yea, they bring forth fruit ; Thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins. But Thou, O Lord, knowest *me* ; Thou hast seen me and tried my heart towards Thee."

The New Jerusalem Messenger, has made known the reason why the faithful, or those who are in a state of regeneration,

suffer equally or perhaps more, than the unfaithful, who know nothing of a spiritual nature: And the reason assigned is, that some are by this means let into states of temptation, by which alone their regeneration can be effected; and with others, it is to prevent their attributing good to themselves; for if such were exempted from troubles, they would then attribute it to their own goodness, and thus would claim merit and glory to themselves. In order, therefore, to prevent this self-appropriation, they are at least equally subject to *general* misfortunes, in order that, as to life, wealth, and possessions, they may be destroyed as well as others. But if mankind were not of such a quality—if they could bear the sunshine of worldly prosperity, those who are pursuing their journey to the heavenly Canaan would be much oftener exempt from common misfortunes. Yet, alas! so weak is our fallen nature, that if we were spared on such occasions, we should be apt to upbraid the unfortunate, and attribute merit to ourselves.

But to return to our immediate subject:—Notwithstanding the perils in which it involved him, we find the prophet continued faithful to his commission, and “spoke the Word of the Lord” in defiance of all opposition: Zedekiah was but just settled on the throne, and Nebuchadnezzar departed out of Judea, and Syria, when several kings of the neighbouring nations, sent their ambassadors to Jerusalem, to congratulate him upon his accession to the throne, and to propose a league against the king of Babylon, in order to shake off his yoke, and prevent his return into those parts. Upon this occasion, Jeremiah, by God’s command, made him bonds and yokes, which he sent by the ambassadors to their respective masters, with this message from God, viz. “That he had given all their countries to the king of Babylon, and therefore their wisest course would be to submit to his yoke, which if they refused to do, both they and their countries should most certainly be destroyed.” But to Zedekiah he went in person, and having persuaded him to submit to the king of Babylon, and not to give credit to false prophets, who might flatter him with a deliverance from his power, he prevailed with him, for that time, not to enter into the league that was proposed. In the seventh year of his reign, however, Zedekiah grew impatient of the Babylonish yoke, and made a confederacy with Pharoah-Hophra, king of Egypt; which when Nebuchadnezzar understood, he drew together a great army out of all the nations

that were under his dominions, and marched against Judea, to punish Zedekiah for his perfidy and rebellion ; and in the ninth year of that king's reign, that victorious army came before Jerusalem, and blocked it close on every side, so that the famine began to prevail in a very short time. In the beginning of the next year, Jeremiah, still faithful to his office, declared to the king in the name of the Lord, that the besieging army would certainly take the city and burn it with fire, making him prisoner, and that he should die in Babylon ; which prediction so enraged Zedekiah that he ordered the prophet to be close shut up in prison. But even here the prophet continued his integrity. For the Egyptians, not daring to engage the Chaldean army, retired before them into their own country, leaving Zedekiah and his people, with their unequal strength, to contend with Nebuchadnezzar, who now more exasperated than ever returned to invest Jerusalem ; on which the king sent messengers to Jeremiah (then confined in the *court* of the prison only, so that he could speak to the people) to enquire the fate of the present war : But, unawed by the perilous situation in which he stood with respect to his natural life, he returned for answer, " Thus saith the Lord, This city shall surely be given into the hands of the king of Babylon's army, which shall take it. And he that remaineth in this city shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence ; but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live ; for he shall have his life for a prey, and shall live ;" which prediction being considered by the chiefs and commanders of the army as tending to discourage the troops and promote revolt, it is added, " Therefore the princes said unto the king, We beseech thee let this man be put to *death* ; for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them ; for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt. Then Zedekiah the king said, Behold he is in your hands ; for the king is not he that can do anything against you ;" or perhaps was so circumstanced that he durst not oppose them. Yet willing perhaps to give the prophet some chance for his life, he did not put him to immediate death ; but, as our text informs us, " Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah, the son of Hammelech, that was in the court of the prison ; and they let down Jeremiah with cords : And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire : So Jeremiah sunk into the mire."

In a former discourse upon these words it has been endeavoured to shew, that in this particular, as well as in all the other recorded circumstances of the prophet's life, he represented the state of the church ; but at the same time it was wished to inculcate, that in representing the state of the fallen church, he also represented both *his* own state and *our* own, or the state of man in general before regeneration ; and that his external sufferings were such as were necessary to produce or excite those internal states whereby he might acquire, according to the Lord's promise on His ordination, " power over the nations and over the kingdoms ;" that is, over *his own* evils and falses, and thereby attain the blessings of the Lord's kingdom.

Prophets, as the term is used in the Holy Scriptures, signify those whom the Lord teaches, that is, all who are in the spiritual affection of truth for its own sake : Also those who teach truths out of the Word : In an abstract sense church-doctrine of truth ; and in an extensive sense, the Word itself. They likewise represent the state of the church as to truth or doctrine ; and when the Word was revealed to the prophets, it was not by influx into their interiors, but by emissary spirits, whom the Lord filled with his aspect ; and the spirit so filled knew no other than that he himself was the Lord, until he had finished his message. And Jeremiah's being ordained a *prophet*, did not exempt him from the infirmities and corruptions of human nature : From these he was to be redeemed by a regular process of regeneration the same as others, and that process was temptation and sufferings. His natural man, indeed, was *quiescent* at the time of receiving the Word of the Lord ; for concerning the prophets we are told, sometimes they were in *vision* or in the spirit ; and at other times that the Word of the Lord *came* to them. When they were in spirit, or in vision, then they were not in the body but in the spirit, in which state they saw such things as were in heaven, or in the spiritual world ; but when the Word *came* to them, they were in the body, and heard Jehovah speak : At such times the Word was not revealed in a state of the spirit or vision, but was dictated *viva voce* to the prophets. These two states of the prophets are carefully to be distinguished ; for in the state of vision, the eyes of their spirit were opened, and the eyes of their body shut, and then they not only heard what the angels spake, or what Jehovah spake by the angels, but saw what the angels *represented to them* in heaven ; and then they seemed to them-

selves to be carried from one place to another, although the body still remained in its place. In such a state was John when he wrote the *Apocalypse*; and occasionally Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and other prophets; and it is then said, that they were in the spirit:—"I was in the spirit (says John the revelator) on the Lord's day!" Thus we see, that the prophets were not necessarily persons of enlightened minds or regenerated states; for their intellect had no concern in their receiving or delivering the Word of God; but that it was the individual process of their own regeneration which qualified them to *represent* certain states of the church.

In our former discourse upon these words, it was considered, from the general doctrine of correspondences, that Jeremiah being let down by *cords* into the dungeon, was significative of the state *from* and *into* which the church had fallen. We may further observe that herein appears likewise to be represented the cause or order of the church's fall: For Jeremiah was cast into the dungeon by the *princes*, which signify the primary things of truth: the dungeon was likewise that of *Malchiah*, the son of the *king*, who also applies to truth, and in a perverted sense, to falses. *Cords*, by which he was let down, have two significations as used in the Word: Thus in the 10th chapter of Jeremiah, it is written, "My tabernacle is spoiled, and all my *cords* are broken: My children are gone forth of me and are not." In this place, *cords* signify spiritual things from a celestial origin; but in Isaiah liv., where it is written, "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitation: spare not, lengthen thy *cords*, and strengthen thy stakes;" there *cords* signify the conjunction of good and truth. We may consider them in this passage in the former sense, and thereby implying the state *from* which the church fell, as the dungeon did that into which it had fallen; but they may likewise here be taken as implying conjunction; and considering them as relating to falses, or primary truths falsified, the *cords* by which the prophet was let down into the dungeon may represent the conjunction which subsists between falses and evils, or that the church fell gradually by a falsification of truth into a state of thick darkness concerning both truth and good, being at length fully immersed in the sensual corporeal principle.

Such was the state of the Jewish church at that time, as represented by Jeremiah being cast into the dungeon: there

being no water therein, implied that there was no truth left whereby the church could be purified, and thereby restored ; and his sinking in the mire, represented that good was likewise destroyed as well as truth, and the life consequently defiled with evils and falses. But, as before observed, the sufferings of Jeremiah, who spiritually represented the state of the Jewish church, were not permitted or inflicted upon him merely because he was a representative character ; but his own hereditary evils and disposition required such trials, and such means of purification rendered him a fit subject to represent the state of the church : And the Lord foreseeing this, on appointing him to the prophetic office, says, “ Before I formed thee in the belly I *knew* thee ; and before thou comest forth out of the womb I *sanctified* thee : I *ordained* thee a prophet unto the nations.” Wherefore, we see that neither prophets, apostles, nor martyrs ; zealots nor patriots, have any thing to *boast* of on account of sufferings ; for their own internal states have required such afflictions, and the kind and degree thereof has been such as were best calculated to subdue their predominant evils : So that the prophet might exclaim from his own experience in his Lamentations, “ Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins ? Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our hearts with our hands unto God in the heavens.”

Let us then, my brethren, whatever station of life we may be in, whether of a public or private nature, or whatever spiritual states we pass through—let us not claim any thing of merit unto ourselves, or make our boast but only in the *Lord* continually ! If we are convinced of the depravity of our own nature—of the evil basis of our own corrupt and sinful inclinations ; if we feel, with the apostle, that we are “ the chief of sinners,” and at the same time are convinced that the Lord is a God of love, order, and purity ; we shall easily perceive the necessity of any sufferings which we *have* passed through, in order to subdue our unruly affections, purify our corrupt principles, and reduce our natural as well as spiritual man to the order of heaven ; and therefore let us humble ourselves under his rod of chastisement ; and then, although we sink, like the prophet, into the mire, when we are let down into the dungeon, yet the Lord will send a friendly Ethiopian, a charitable eunuch, to elevate us from that low state.

SERMON III.

Jeremiah, xxxviii. 7—10.

Now when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon (the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin), Ebed-melech went forth out of the king's house, and spake to the king, saying, My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is, for there is no more bread in the city. Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon before he die.

IN a former discourse upon the history of the prophet Jeremiah, it has been endeavoured to shew, that it was from his own individual state that he became a proper subject to represent that of the Lord's church, and that he also underwent those persecutions and personal afflictions which we read of his suffering in the book bearing his name, although his prophetic office was the *apparent* or instrumental cause of all his calamities. For although bad as well as good men may, from their offices, or worldly situations, represent the highest characters, as “every king, whether in Judah, Israel, Egypt or elsewhere, might represent the Lord, for the royalty itself was representative. In like manner all *priests*, whether good or bad, represented the Lord, the priestly office itself being representative; for the nature and quality of the person is not at all reflected on, but the office only.” Yet their personal afflictions all arise from their own individual state. Was this not the case, the example of Jeremiah would confirm the doctrine of election and predestination; as we must consider the Lord as having doomed an individual to a life of affliction in this world, merely to represent, to a people who would not attend to him, their own internal state, and this without any other plea of justice than

that which the prophet Ezekiel so strongly condemns, viz. that "the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge," or what is generally called *Original Sin*; although the Lord has positively declared by the same prophet, "The soul that sinneth *it* shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; but the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."

In tracing the history of Jeremiah, however, we may readily distinguish the two states of the unregenerate and the regenerate mind; whence we may rationally conclude that his sufferings produced the desired effect; for it is well to observe, that external sufferings serve as a ground or plane for spiritual excitements and purifications. It is not improbable but Jeremiah might expect a *literal* fulfilment of the Lord's promise, recorded in the first chapter of his book as made when "the Word of the Lord first came to him;" and we find a great deal of the unregenerate spirit of the natural man manifested at the commencement of his external sufferings. Thus in the twentieth chapter, when Pashar the son of Immer the priest, who was also chief governor of the house of the Lord, had heard what Jeremiah prophesied against Judah and Jerusalem, and thereupon had him scourged and put in the public stocks, the prophet did not submit very patiently, but complains, "O Lord, Thou hast deceived me and I was deceived; Thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed. I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me. Cursed be the day wherein I was born; let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed. Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my father, saying, A man child is born unto thee, making him very glad. And let that man be as the cities which the Lord overthrew and repented not: And let him hear the cry in the morning, and the shouting at noon-tide: Because he slew me not from the womb; or that my mother might have been my grave. Wherefore came I out of the womb to see labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?"—This is not the language of a regenerant mind, whether it apply to the church or to an individual. But the prophet's conduct and temper is very different in the more advanced periods of his life—in that part of his history which comes under our present consideration; and the three last chapters of his Lamentations evidently allude to his own

regenerate state as well as to that of the church, and supremacy of the Lord ; where judging by his own experience that the sufferings of the church would be the means of its purification, he prophetically exults, “ The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion ; he will no more carry thee away into captivity : Thou, O Lord, remainest for ever : Thy throne from generation to generation. Wherefore dost Thou forsake us so long time ? Turn Thou us unto Thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned : Renew our days as of old.”

In the two previous discourses, we accompanied the prophet “ into the dungeon of Malchiah, the son of Hammelech, that was in the court of the prison ; where they let down Jeremiah with cords ; in which dungeon there was no water, but mire ;” and from the general doctrine of correspondences this circumstance has been considered as significative of the state *from* and *into* which the church had fallen, viz. from that of celestial-spiritual to that of being merely sensual and corporeal, and consequently into a state of vastation ; for such was the state of the Jewish church and nation at that time. Totally immersed in sensuality, and ignorant of every thing of a spiritual nature, they considered themselves entitled to heaven merely from “ the promise made to the fathers,” or from a belief that they were the favourites of heaven, or a chosen people, without any respect to the internal principles from which their external life proceeded. Hence there was no truth left in the church by which it could be purified and thereby restored, but the life was wholly defiled with evils and falses.

To pursue, however, the instructive history of Jeremiah in his personal sufferings :—We find that the Lord did not forsake His prophet :—Although he complained, “ Mine enemies chased me sore like a bird, without cause. They have cut off my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me ;” yet “ the Lord heard his voice and drew near unto him ;” for our text informs us, that “ when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which was in the king’s house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon (the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin) Ebed-melech went forth out of the king’s house, and spake to the king, saying, My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon, and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is, for there is no more bread in

the city. Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men in thy hand (for so the proper translation is) Take from hence thirty men *in thy hand*, and take up Jeremiah the prophet, out of the dungeon before he die. So Ebed-melech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast cloths, and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah."

The conduct of this eunuch is an excellent lesson for us, my brethren, as it exhibits an example of that charity and benevolence in a *literal* sense, which ought to be the characteristic of every member of the Lord's New Church. But as the consideration thereof will be the subject of a future discourse, it will be endeavoured at present, to open its *internal* signification.

The name Ebed-melech signifies the servant of a king, but an Ethiopian denotes one who is in possession of celestial things, or such as love charity and the works of charity, and by a eunuch is signified the natural man as to good and as to truth, but specifically the natural man as to good. Thus it is written in Isaiah, "Let not the son of the stranger that hath joined himself to the Lord speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from His people: neither let the eunuch say I am a dry tree. For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant: Even unto them will I give in My house, and within My walls, a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters." "Where eunuch denotes the natural man as to good, and the son of the stranger the natural man as to truth; for the church of the Lord is external and internal; they who are of the external church are natural, and they who are of the internal church are spiritual; they who are natural and yet are in good are what are here called eunuchs, and they who are in truth are the sons of the stranger; and whereas the truly spiritual or internal cannot be given except within the church, therefore by the sons of the stranger are signified they who are out of the church, or the Gentiles, and who yet are in truth according to their religious principles." But as an Ethiopian signifies one who is in possession of celestial things, or such as love charity and the works of charity, it is presumed

that in the supreme sense the Lord Himself is signified, who is still desirous of saving the church.

By Ebed-melech applying to the king, then sitting in the gate of *Benjamin*, is signified by means of truths drawn from the literal sense of the Word; a king denoting truth; Benjamin implying a medium, and also the Word in its ultimate; and the gate, (which was a passage or entrance into the city) signifying a doctrine by which there was an entrance into the church, thus doctrine drawn from the literal sense of the Word, by which the church might yet be preserved; and in which external doctrine alone the Jews were principled; care being taken by the Lord that no one is admitted further into true acknowledgment and belief of heart than he is capable of being preserved in: "In order, therefore, to prevent profanation, the internal or spiritual sense of the Word was not opened either to the Jewish or first Christian Churches. Hence it was hidden (more especially from the Jews,) that there was any such thing as a spiritual or internal sense of the Word. And that they might be held in such ignorance, it was provided that the science of correspondences, which was the chief science of the ancients, was lost, so that it was altogether unknown what is meant by correspondence, in which the Word is written."

"My lord the king," says this worthy Ethiopian, "these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon, and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is, for there is no more bread in the city." Hereby is signified the state of the rational principle of the church; for *men*, in a perverted sense, signify evil rational things and false doctrines thence derived: "These *men* have done evil." To *hunger* is to desire good from affection, because bread, in the internal sense, is the good of love and charity, and food in general is good: To *hunger* likewise signifies to desire knowledge, and bread signifies the Word of God, from which spiritual nutrition is derived. Therefore by Jeremiah being "like to die for hunger in the place where he is," is signified that if the church continued in that state it would inevitably perish, as it could no longer obtain support even from the doctrines which they derived from the letter of the Word. In this sense the term *hunger* is used in other parts of the Word; as in the Psalms, "Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them: Then they cried unto the Lord in their

trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses. O that men would therefore praise the Lord for His goodness, and His wonderful works to the children of men. For He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the *hungry* soul with goodness." And in the song of Mary, the mother of our Lord, commonly called *Magnificat*, who represented the church, it is written, "He hath filled the *hungry* with *good* things, and the rich He hath sent empty away."

"Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men in thy hand, and take up Jeremiah out of the dungeon before he die." That something of a spiritual signification is implied in these words is very evident, as it would not require the assistance of *thirty* men to draw a poor half-starved mortal out of the dungeon of a prison. But all numbers in the Word imply things: Thus the number ten signifies what is full; also much and many; likewise every thing and all: Hence the things which were written on the two tables of the Decalogue by Jehovah were called the *TEN WORDS*, which signify *all* truths, for they include them. That the Decalogue consisted of *Ten* Words, or precepts, and that Jehovah wrote them on tables, likewise signifies *remains*, and their being written by the hand of Jehovah signifies that remains are of the Lord alone, and their being in the internal man, also was represented by tables. The number three also signifies what is *full* from beginning to end, or a *full* state of the church; therefore, as *thirty* is a compound number, it signifies somewhat of combat, and also what is full of remains: The reason that it has this *two-fold* signification is, because it is compounded of five and six multiplied into each other, and also of three and ten multiplied likewise into each other; and a compound number involves the like with the simple numbers whereof it is compounded. Therefore from five multiplied by six, the number thirty signifies somewhat of combat, because five signify somewhat, or a little, and six combat; but from three multiplied into ten, it signifies what is full of remains, because three signify what is full, and ten remains. Hence the number thirty is of great importance as used in the Word of God. For as man cannot be regenerated, that is, be admitted into spiritual combats whereby regeneration is effected, until he has received remains to the full, therefore it was ordained that the Levites should not do work in the tent of the assembly

until they had completed *thirty* years ; neither did the Lord manifest Himself until He was *thirty* years, for He was then in the fulness of holy remains. But the remains which the Lord had, He procured to *Himself*, and they were in fact *Divine*, whereby He united the human essence to the Divine, and made *it* (the human) divine also. From Him therefore it is that *thirty* signifies a full state as to remains, and that the priests did not enter into their functions till they were *thirty* years old ; for every representative is derived *from* the Lord, and hence every representative has respect *to* the Lord. By Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, then, taking with him *thirty* men, or taking *thirty* men in his hand, is signified that by the remains stored up by the Lord, if brought forth to light and life, the church might be restored, or rather a new church would be raised up ; for hand signifies *power*, and *thirty*, as before observed, *re-mains* ; which are the knowledges of truth and goodness, or the truths and goodnesses which have been learnt from infancy out of the Lord's Word, and also states of innocence and love thence derived. In case man had no such remains, he would not indeed be a man, but much viler than a brute, and the fewer remains there are, the less he is a man, and the more remains there are, the more he is a man.

Thus we see that great arcana are concealed under this natural history of the prophet ; from the opening of which we may derive much spiritual instruction. The present fallen state of the church, and consequently of mankind, is such, that we may all be said, in our unregenerate state, to be, like Jeremiah, cast into the dungeon, or wholly immersed in the sensual or corporeal principle, in which state we find no water, or truths of purification, and therefore sink into a life defiled with evils and falses ; so that we should inevitably perish, did not the Lord still form a conjunction with us by remains stored up in earlier stages of life. By His mercy alone it is that those remains are brought forth, by which we are saved from the pit, and introduced into His church and kingdom. In His Divine Humanity we find the true Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, who pleads our cause, procures our liberation, and provides the means of our final deliverance ;—but as it is intended in our next discourse to consider the means made use of by Ebed-melech to draw the prophet out of the dungeon, we shall conclude at present by recommending each of us to apply the his-

tory of Jeremiah to our own states, that by following his example in our difficulties and temptations, though our “gold is become dim, our fine gold changed, and the stones of the sanctuary poured out at the top of every street ;” yet we shall experience that “God will save Zion, and build the cities of Judah, that they may again dwell therein, and have it in possession.”

SERMON IV.

Jeremiah, xxxviii. 10—13.

Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon before he die. So Ebed-melech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts, and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon, to Jeremiah. And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, said unto Jeremiah, Put now these old cast clouts and old rotten rags under thine arm-holes, under the cords. And Jeremiah did so. So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon, and Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

ALTHOUGH we cannot vouch for the accuracy of our Scripture-Chronologers, yet according to the margin of our common Bibles, Jeremiah continued to deliver his prophecies occasionally for twenty-four years before we have any record of his suffering persecution on that account, and sixteen years longer before the circumstances took place which are recorded in our text. During that period of *forty* years there is no doubt but the prophet underwent a variety of sufferings, notwithstanding they are not here particularly specified; because we find that in his prayer to the Lord at a much earlier period, he complains thereof: “O Lord (he exclaims) Thou knowest, remember me, and visit me, and revenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in Thy long-suffering. Know that for Thy sake I have suffered rebuke: Thy words were found and I did eat them, and Thy Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart, for I am called by Thy name, O Lord God of Hosts. I sat not in the assembly of the mockers nor rejoiced: I sat alone, because of Thy hand; for Thou hast filled me with indignation. Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed? Wilt Thou be altogether unto me as a liar, and as waters that fail?” We should not

have noticed these circumstances, *apparently* of no moment, but as they tend to shew the exact correspondence which exists in all parts of the Word of God, though too little attended to by the generality of readers. For the number forty (which thus appears to be about the term of the prophet's sufferings) signifies a full state of temptation, and thus confirms the observations before made, respecting the prophet's *own* as well as his *representative* state: That the number forty has such a signification is manifest from various parts of the Word: Thus respecting the Deluge, it is said that the rain continued *forty* days and *forty* nights; by which is signified the duration or continuance of temptation. It is said also of Moses, that he was on mount Sinai "*forty* days and *forty* nights, during which he did neither eat bread nor drink water, praying for the people, lest they should be destroyed." The Israelites, likewise, were *forty* years in the wilderness; and that their continuance there signified a full state of temptation, appears from the allusion of Moses thereto, where he tells them, "Thou shalt remember all the ways which Jehovah thy God led thee this *forty* years in the wilderness, to *humble* thee, to *try* thee, and to *know* what was in thy *heart*, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments or no." The ground and reason why by the number forty is signified the duration of temptation, is because the Lord suffered Himself to be tempted of the devil *forty* days; wherefore we are told, that "since all things were representative of the Lord, when an idea of temptation was present with the angels, that idea was represented in the world of spirits by such things as are in the world; consequently it was represented by *forty*, because the Lord was tempted *forty* days: For what is to come and what is present, are the same thing with the Lord, and thereby the same in the angelic heaven; what is to come to pass is present, or what will come to pass, that is come to pass: Hence came the representation of temptations, and also of vastations by the number *forty* in the representative church."

Thus it was that Jeremiah, during forty years, continued to prophecy, and by his sufferings to represent the state of the church. But in all his sufferings, both as to his individual state, as well as in his representative character, he had the Lord's promise of "strength equal to his day," though we frequently find him making grievous complaints! Thus in

reply to the complaint which we have just now mentioned, the Lord answered him, “If thou *return*, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before Me: And if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as My mouth: And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.” And respecting his official character, to the appointment of which he appears to have made great objections, the Lord says, “Thou, therefore, gird up thy loins, and speak unto them all that I command thee: Be not afraid of their faces, lest I confound thee before them: For behold I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. And they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee.” And, if we fully understood the history of Jeremiah, we should find this was literally true—that the Lord does not permit any one to undergo sufferings more than are necessary for their own individual state, and even in those sufferings, as soon as they have produced the desired effect, He causes them to cease. Hence, though we cannot judge what the prophet’s state was when he was let down into the dungeon, we find that when, in a state of humility, he there “called upon the name of the Lord,” the Lord raised up Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, to go and intercede with king Zedekiah for the prophet’s release; who “commanded him, saying, Take from hence thirty men in thy hand, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die. So (continues our text) Ebed-melech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords to Jeremiah into the dungeon. And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now these old cast clouts and old rotten rags under thine arm-holes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so. So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon, and Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.”

From the various circumstances related in this account, we have already shewn the state of the church to be signified: That from the first to the third verse, where the Lord declares

that those who remain in the city shall perish, but that those who go forth to the Chaldeans, shall live, is signified that those who have not been vastated shall be so: By the princes making application for the death of Jeremiah, and casting him into the dungeon, was shewn that those of the church would still make themselves obstinate in perverting the doctrine from the Word and defiling it. And from the seventh to the twenty-first verses, which include our text, is signified, that the remaining truths, which were not wholly falsified, would nevertheless be mingled with falses: And that if they should pervert them any longer, they will perish; but that they will not perish if the remaining truths should not be so perverted. Thus, with respect to our text, a house, we know, as mentioned in the Scriptures, signifies the church as well as the mind of man; the house of the king under the treasury, therefore, signifies the church principally as to truth, and the mind as to the *knowledges* of good and truth. Linen, when mentioned in the Word, signifies Divine Truth, and the truth of spiritual love; and as linen clean and shining, signifies what is bright by virtue of good, and what is pure by virtue of truth; so old cast clouts and old rotten rags, being linen defiled and marred, it is presumed may signify what is cast off and defiled by reason of falses, and what is rotten by reason of adulterations, of the literal sense of the Word. By arms are denoted power, and by the shoulders, under which are the arm-holes, the power of truth from good: The cords also, by which the prophet was to be drawn up, and under which he was to place these rags, signify, as before observed, conjunction, and also things spiritual from a celestial origin; and the thirty men remains. From all which we conclude that by application of doctrines drawn from the literal sense of the Word, united with remains stored up in the internal man, or by the doctrine of faith united with charity, conjunction might still be formed with the Lord, whereby the church, even when in the state represented by the prophet, might be restored.

In every state of the church, therefore, we see the Lord's Providence and mercy operating for the salvation of mankind, so far as is consistent with Divine Order and man's free-will. And notwithstanding it is foreseen that the *church* must inevitably perish, yet those individuals who observe the Lord's warnings, and who are principled in truths drawn from

the literal sense of the Word, if they unite charity with their faith, or practice with their profession, shall, as the prophet observes, "have their lives for a prey." Thus Jeremiah, by obeying the directions of Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, and putting these old cast clouts and old rotten rags under his arm-holes, that is spiritually, by *applying* the doctrine of charity to the truths drawn from the literal sense of the Word, was raised out of the dungeon, or elevated above the sensual and corporeal principle, and abode in the court of the prison, or in a state of external truth, until the day that Jerusalem was taken, that is, till the church was fully vastated.

We see, then, that notwithstanding all these circumstances literally took place, yet in the transactions themselves something spiritual was represented; and in the account thereof we find something which may be usefully applied to ourselves and our own individual states. For as the church is now sunk into a state similar to that represented by the prophet; so man, by birth, or before regeneration, is immersed in that sensual and corporeal principle signified by the dungeon into which he was cast.

The external sufferings of Jeremiah are all representative likewise of the trials which we must encounter in our spiritual warfare, before we can arrive at that state in which the Lord can "give us power over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, to pull down, and to destroy; to thrown down, to build and to plant." And as in every stage of the prophet's vastation, the Lord ordained means for his relief; so in all our difficulties and temptations, whether of an internal or external, a spiritual or temporal kind, we shall always experience that the Lord will never leave nor forsake those that trust in Him. My brethren, cannot many of us confirm this from our own experience? Though we have not been tried exactly in the same manner, yet have we not passed through states in which, like him, we have lamented "the hour in which we were born, and the day which gave us birth?" Have we not complained, "Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to see labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?" Yet have we not, even when plunged in the dungeon of despair, and there sinking in the mire, have we not been delivered as it were by a miracle, and drawn forth thence "with the cords of a man, with the bands of love?" Yet what

effect have all these mercies had upon us? Have they inspired us with greater confidence in the Lord, and less dependence upon ourselves? Have our hearts overflowed with gratitude, and have we exclaimed with the prophet, "Sing unto the Lord; praise ye the Lord; for He hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evil doers?" Or, if these troubles have happened unto us since the "Word of the Lord came unto us," or since we have passed through *some* states of the regenerate life, have we followed the example of the prophet in his first difficulties and prior stages of purification, in which he exclaims, "Since I spake I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the Word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision daily: Then I said, I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name. But His Word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay?"

If *this* be our state,—if we are in rebellion against the correcting hand of our heavenly Father, and call for vengeance on the instruments of His chastisements; and if we think of relinquishing a religious life, because we have experienced a few temporal difficulties or persecutions in consequence of our spiritual views; let us remember the Lord's threatening to the prophet on a like occasion: "Gird up thy loins and arise; speak unto them all that I command thee: Be not dismayed at their faces, lest I *confound* thee before them." If any of us be in this state, let us turn, and "give glory to the Lord our God, before He cause darkness, and before our feet stumble upon the dark mountains;" and lest "while we look for light, He turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness."

Before we close this subject there is one circumstance particularly worthy of attention, which is, that whilst the prophet's own countrymen—the princes of the nation which he was anxious to save from ruin—the priests and elders of that church of which he was a member, and whose restoration he was endeavouring to effect;—when these were all conspiring the prophet's death; and even the king whom he was persuading to save his own life, was consenting to his death: the only person who appears to have interested himself in his behalf was a *stranger*—Ebed-melech the Ethiopian,

one of the king's eunuchs—one who was not a Jew—not of the church, but of a different nation, religion, and complexion : *He* was the only person who, like our Lord's good Samaritan in the gospel, could be found to intercede for the persecuted prophet, and pour oil and balm into his wounds ; and when he had obtained the king's permission to relieve him, studied how to draw him out of the dungeon with the greatest tenderness : “Put now (says the charitable Ethiopian to the almost exhausted prophet) put now these old cast clouts and old rotten rags under thine arm-holes :” Their softness will prevent the rough cords from bruising thy flesh, and we shall draw thee out with greater ease to thyself. “And Jeremiah did so !”—What a lesson to us, my brethren, in our acts of compassion and benevolence ! It wants no comment.

Let us, then, consider well this history of Jeremiah, both literally and spiritually, that we may apply it to ourselves !—Born into an hereditary principle of self-love and the love of the world, thus prone to evil “as the sparks fly upwards,” and alienated from the love of heaven and goodness, we have a laborious work to get through, before we can attain the end for which we were originally created ; for our hereditary propensities occasion us to fall into actual evils, so that we are continually sinking deeper into the mire, or lower in the corporeal principle, until, by the Divine *Mercy* of the Lord, we are brought to a knowledge of our state, and directed, by the Divine *Providence*, to seek the way to the kingdom of heaven : This lost state of ourselves, and the only way of redemption, we are too often brought to a knowledge of, by means of troubles and afflictions, sickness or distress, because, alas ! all gentler means fail of the proper effect. And even when we have attained this knowledge, a continuance of the *same* means is frequently necessary to preserve us from again falling : So that whilst we are really “seeking Zion with our faces thitherward,” we find, by experience, that we must, “through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of heaven.” To assist us, however, in the way, the Lord has given us His Holy Word, and in that Word has given us examples of prophets, patriarchs, and apostles, yea of his own person also, whose footsteps we ought to follow, in order to effect our regeneration. Let us, then, like the prophet whose history we have just been considering, “both

hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." If our own evils have rendered "our affliction and our misery, the wormwood and the gall" necessary for us, let us acknowledge, with the prophet, "My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is *humbled* in me: This I call to mind, therefore I have hope. It is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. Though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies. O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul, thou hast redeemed my life."

END OF SERMONS ON JERRMIAH.

Additional Discourses.

I.

TO YOUNG PERSONS.

Exodus, xvi. 36.

Now an Omer is the Tenth part of an Ephah.

MY YOUNG FRIENDS,

This discourse is specially addressed to *you*; and whatever gratification a preacher might receive from the sight of so numerous an assemblage of young persons as appears on this occasion, that gratification would be a mere selfish one, unless, by the Divine Mercy of the Lord, some mental instruction should be impressed upon your hearts, whereby your now assembling may tend to promote your eternal happiness. This, it is hoped, was the chief motive for requesting your attendance; for it is the duty of a preacher to stand, like Moses, in the gap betwixt you and your God! He is a medium only, to introduce you into the holy place. But as the present discourse completes the probationary number required by the Rules of our Church*, it was thought a duty incumbent to address one

* This may need explanation. At this time it was required by the Regulations of the church, that if any member should offer himself as a Candidate for the Ministerial Office, he should pass through probationary course, both of reading and preaching, in the Society of which he might be a member. And in the printed "Rites and Ceremonies" of the Church, answering to the present Rules and Regulations of the Conference, it was specified, that no person should be ordained a Minister without proper testimonials as to life and character, and a recommendation from a Society or Congregation, before whom he should have "preached *probationary*, at least *seven times*." It was also required that the Candidate for Ordination should preach once or oftener before the Ordaining Ministers, and (if required) from a text to be appointed, in order to give a satisfactory proof of his knowledge of, as well as belief in, the genuine doctrines of the Word of God, as opened in the writings of His servant Emanuel Swedenborg. There was also a Rule to this effect;—that, except in cases of emergency,

of them principally to you ; therefore as it may possibly be the last time that *I* shall have such an opportunity*, the cause must plead as an apology for detaining you rather longer than customary. And if this Holy Book—this Eternal Word of God, should be shewn to many of you in a different light from what you have hitherto beheld it—if you should be convinced, by the instance of the passage selected, that there cannot be a sentence in the whole Word of God, but what contains subjects of the utmost importance to your eternal happiness ;—after such conviction, you will read it with much greater satisfaction than you have before felt, and of course you will want but little persuasion to the necessity of continually studying and meditating upon its contents.

For this purpose a text has been selected, which from its singularity, is likely to make an impression upon your memories, and which in its internal and spiritual signification, is of the first importance to your eternal felicity.

“Now an omer is the tenth part of an ephah.” This is the concluding verse of the 16th chapter of Exodus ; in which chapter we are informed that the Israelites entered the wilderness of Sin, on their journey to the promised land ; but that having eaten up all the provision which they brought with them out of Egypt, they began to murmur against Moses and Aaron, for want of bread and flesh, as they had before done for want of water. The Lord, therefore, by as great a miracle as that of bringing water out of the rock, supplied them with bread and flesh ; for “the Lord spake unto Moses saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel ; speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh ; and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread : and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God. And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp ; and in the morning the dew lay round about the host. And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay

no person should be permitted to assist in any of the Ministerial Duties, except a Minister, or one intended or preparing for that Office. In compliance with the then Regulations of the Church, the writer preached the required number of probationary discourses before the Society that wished him to be their Minister ; and this is the last of the Series—the last Discourse delivered prior to his Ordination. The one that here follows is the first preached after his ordination.

* That is in case of his not being admitted to ordination.

a small round thing, small as the hoar frost, upon the ground. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna ; for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat."

This chapter is one of those portions of the Word of God, which young people delight in reading, because it is entertaining in its literal sense, and contains a relation of wonders and miracles : but, my young friends, to read that many thousand years since the Israelites were miraculously fed by the Almighty in the wilderness, would be of no more importance to us than any other historical relation, unless under such historical fact, something more internal and spiritual was conveyed, which belonged to us in these days. Be assured, therefore, the fact is, that all the various transactions recorded in the Word of God, whether natural or supernatural, are types or shadows of spiritual and heavenly things ; and the forty years journeying of the Israelites through the wilderness of Sin, is a representative of our internal passage through those spiritual temptations and troubles by which, of necessity, we must be assaulted in our journey to the heavenly kingdom. The manna, likewise, by which they were so miraculously fed, was a representative of that real bread of heaven, with which the soul of every Christian is as miraculously supported now, as their bodies were then, and by which alone we can be internally nourished and enabled to support the trials and temptations attendant on the spiritual warfare. But one of the most remarkable particulars in the dispensation of the manna, and which is of the utmost importance for young people to consider, was, that a certain portion only was granted them per day, and this portion expressed by the smallest measure used in the tabernacle ; for "Thus saith the Lord unto Moses, Behold I will rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day.....And Moses said unto them, This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man.....Now an omer is the tenth part of an ephah."

From these words it will be endeavoured,

First, To explain what was signified by an omer, in the Jewish Church, and what it spiritually represents, as applying

to Christians, particularly to the members of the Lord's New Church.

Secondly, To consider the reason why so small a portion was allotted for their daily food. And,

Thirdly, Some observations will be drawn from what has been premised, shewing the necessity and utility of obeying, as well as the danger of neglecting, the divine command, to gather every man an omer of it daily.

I. In reading the history of the Israelites, from their departure out of Egypt, to their entrance into the land of Canaan, particularly in the establishment of their sacrificial and tabernacle service, we find great exactness enjoined to certain weights and measures, as the shekel, the hin, the bath, the ephah, and the omer; and as the Jewish establishment was wholly representative, so were those weights and measures representative likewise, each having a spiritual signification peculiar to itself. The omer, which is the subject of our present consideration, appears to have been one of the smallest measures in sacred use, and perhaps was much smaller than is generally set down in the Jewish standard, since our text evidently speaks of it as a very small portion, and such, indeed, does its spiritual import imply.

“Now an omer is the tenth part of an ephah.”

Spiritually considered, we may indeed affix two meanings to the expression: first, as an *omer*, or very small measure, and filled with manna, which signifies spiritual good, it implies the least portion possible thereof; but as being the *tenth*, or a *tenth part*, it likewise signifies *fulness*; also the remnant or *remains*. By an omer for each person being sufficient; as it applied to the Israelites in the sense of the letter, is clearly implied a miracle, corresponding to that of our Lord's feeding the company of five thousand. In a spiritual view, it may be considered as shewing the low state of that people; when what was considered a sufficiency, or fulness, of spiritual good to them, (as they were only the representative of a church, and not a real one,) was the smallest portion possible; but in a real spiritual church implies the fulness of good and truth with which the man of that church should be gifted; and in the Lord's true celestial church, (such as will be the New Jerusalem,) an omer is significative of the remnant, or remains, by which alone the real Christian can be regenerated, and the church established.

Concerning the remnant, or remains, in every particular man, and in the church in general, frequent mention is made in the prophets ; and, though a subject of the greatest moment, appears not to have obtained that full consideration and attention in our church which it requires ; for this *remnant* signifies man's capacity of being regenerated, as also that heavenly manna,—that celestial food, by which alone our souls can be nourished and prepared for eternal life.

My young friends, you have most of you *heard*, and been taught in your still younger years, if you have not yet understood the true meaning thereof, that we are all “by nature born in sin, the children of wrath,” and that we are by inward or spiritual baptism “made the children of grace ;” that is, we are all born hereditarily immersed in evil and false principles, with desires and inclinations, which, if not checked, would lead us to misery rather than to happiness ; but that the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our only God and Saviour, will, if we do not resist the operation of His holy spirit, raise us up from this sinful state, to a life of righteousness : He will root out this old corrupt nature, these evil and false principles, and instead thereof implant a new nature—heavenly principles—a real love for goodness and truth in our hearts ; thereby enabling us to become children of God, and heirs of His salvation. But as we “are *born* in sin”—as we inherit nothing but evil from our earthly parents, so this new nature—this goodness and truth, can only be implanted gradually, be stored up by very small portions, and that by the Lord Himself. These very small portions, which *apparently* belong to man (though all good in reality is the Lord's) are not only the goodnesses and truths which man has learnt from his infancy out of the Lord's Word, and which were thereby impressed on the memory ; but they are likewise all *states* thence derived, as states of innocence from infancy ; states of love towards parents, brothers, teachers, friends ; states of charity towards our neighbour, and of mercy towards the poor and needy ; in short, all states of goodness and truth : These states, with their goodnesses and truths impressed upon the memory, are called *remains* ; which remains are preserved by the Lord, and are stored up in man's internal, whilst he is altogether ignorant thereof. These remains (that is, the few remains of the Lord's image and likeness which are yet capable of being manifested in the human heart) are again

brought forth in more advanced life, to assist and promote man's regeneration, and enable him to resist the assaults of internal enemies.

Now as these states,—these remains are only known to, and stored up by, the Lord Himself; so is their effect, or the manner of their operation also; though perhaps some very faint idea thereof may be obtained by considering thus:—When young people are first tempted to enter into the paths of vice, they receive many internal checks, by suggestions arising from truths learnt and practised even in infancy, and stored up by the Lord in former states; such as the ten precepts of the Decalogue—sundry passages in the Word of God—precepts taught by parents, tutors, and friends. All these remains or small portions of good (or the *recollection*, as it is called, of these opposite sentiments,) with a degree of horror for the vice by which they are tempted, are brought forth by the Lord to combat the assault; and trifling as they may appear in our eyes—though but the tenth part of an ephah of spiritual virtue be contained in each; yet if even the natural disposition be inclined to good, they will preserve the youth, and thereby add to the store of internal good; for be it remembered, that every conquest over a temptation—every resistance of evil, is an accumulation of good. But if the mind be “fully set to do evil;” then though these remains are at first brought forth to assist (for no one ever entered into vice without first receiving a warning from the Lord), if their salutary aid be rejected, the Lord then withdraws the heavenly guards—these messengers of wisdom, and closing them in the inmost spiritual recesses of the soul, that they may not be polluted or profaned, the miserable youth yields to the temptation, which strengthens by conquest, and at length plunges with eagerness into the insane pleasures of vice, of folly, and of guilt.

This will be sufficient to shew what is meant by remains, and their use in man's regeneration. Therefore we proceed to consider,

II. The reason why so small a portion is allotted to man daily. “Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man....Now an omer is the tenth part of an ephah.”

This has in a great measure been answered in the above observations; but it may be further remarked, that as the state of the Israelites was then, so is the general state of Christians

at this day. They know, indeed, by rote, the name of their God, and they expect redemption *by* Him; but of His real name or nature, and of the true internal redemption wrought *in* man by His assumption of the humanity, they are totally ignorant. That His nature is *Love*—that His name is *the Lord Jesus Christ*—that He who was born in a manger at Bethlehem, is THE MIGHTY GOD—these are facts which “to the Jews were a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness;” and too many of *us*, it is to be feared, know these things only by tradition. We have not yet learned by *experience*, that we are in spiritual bondage, and that the Lord must bring us out thence “with a mighty hand and a stretched out arm.” Born in sin, immersed in evils, and thus in bondage to our corrupted nature, the opposite principles of goodness and purity can be but very slowly received; therefore we have a long and dreary journey, through a spiritual wilderness, and dreadful combats to endure, before we can enjoy a perfect freedom, and enter the heavenly Canaan. And though during our passage we are occasionally refreshed with springs of water, fruits of the earth in large clusters, and various spoils of the enemy; yet the true heavenly bread, the spiritual manna, is allotted to us in small and daily portions—to every state an omer.

“The people shall go out,” saith the Lord, “and gather a certain rate every day,” or, as more literally translated, “the provision of a day in his day; that I may *prove* them, whether they will walk in my law or no.” From which we may learn the important lessons, That in our spiritual progress, our sole dependence for internal support must be daily and hourly on the Lord alone;—that we can receive the heavenly manna only in proportion to the use we make of it.

We may further learn, that there is a certain rate of this heavenly manna appropriate to every state of spiritual life; that though these states may increase, or occur more frequent, if we improve them; yet we are at best only *recipients* of the heavenly gift, and can appropriate no larger a portion thereof than is consistent with our real internal state.—Likewise, that although this heavenly manna is gathered in very small portions,—though the tenth part of an ephah be the portion allotted to every state; yet these remains—the smallest portion possible of the divine gifts is sufficient, when brought forth into life, to promote our salvation; and where there is a sincere and humble

mind, earnestly seeking the heavenly treasure, there can be *no lack*, however small the *appearances* of improvement may be. —Therefore, whilst we are withheld from presumption, by the small “provision of a day in his day,”—by an omer being the daily portion allotted to each of us; we are also kept from despondency, by observing “the dew lie round the camp *every morning*,” because we are assured, that “when that dew goes up, we shall behold upon the face of the wilderness a small round thing, small as the hoar frost upon the ground;” which we shall find is the *manna*, which the Lord has given us to eat, and of which we may gather sufficient for the day.

Having thus, in some degree, opened the spiritual import of our text, and considered the reason why so small a portion is our daily allotment; we proceed,

III. To make some observations on the necessity and utility of obeying, as well as the danger of neglecting, the divine command, to gather every man an omer of it daily.

In speaking from the present text, it has been endeavoured to shew, that insignificant as the words appear in their literal sense; yet, when opened according to the sublime doctrine of correspondences, and applied to the subject of which they are predicated, they afford the most ample field for meditation and conversation, and thereby occasion a much greater veneration for, and delight in, the sacred Scriptures, than we can otherwise obtain. But, if this one short passage—this less than the ten thousandth time ten thousandth part of an omer (in comparison to this ocean of infinite wisdom) can bestow such a gratification, what an encouragement is this to study the sacred volume, and most seriously, attentively, and devoutly to read those Writings, which open this heavenly casket and shew us inestimable treasures! My young friends, Can the reading any immoral publications—can impure conversation—or the base incitements of lust, adultery, and seduction, afford such real substantial joys, as one hour’s worship in the house of God, where His Word is opened and explained—as one evening’s study in the book of true wisdom? Be assured, the enemy of mankind never deals more treacherously, though never more effectually, especially with young people, than when he paints Religion with a gloomy aspect; for “the life of religion is to do good;” and that being obedient to our Creator, serviceable to our fellow-creatures, and furthering the happiness of all around us, should be a cause

of gloominess and melancholy, is inconsistent with the nature either of God or man. Allowing, however, that at times, it occasions a degree of seriousness which has the *appearance* of gloominess, it is doubtless a *pleasing* melancholy rather than otherwise; arising from that state which enables its votaries to offer up an *omer* to heaven, from an humble heart. And say, ye young men, who have spent your nights in riot and debauchery, and your days in planning new schemes of luxury and seduction; Say, What are the benefits *your* souls have received from such conduct? Are you enabled, upon a cool reflection, from the states you have thus passed through, to present even the ten thousandth part of an ephah, as a memorial before the God of heaven, to be kept in his sacred repository? Would you wish the revels you have just passed through to be recorded in the annals of eternity? If not, why will you barter the real good of *your* souls for the fleeting impure pleasures of the sensual appetite.

A further inducement to obey, and which shews the danger of disobeying the divine command to gather an omer of the heavenly manna daily, arises from the awful consideration, that "the provision for the day can only be gathered *in its day*;" therefore, as the apostle says, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" Every state which man passes through in this life produces consequences for eternity; therefore, in every state we are storing up something either for heaven or hell—for our future happiness or misery. But there are no works of supererogation in preparing for eternity; we cannot gather in one day provision for seven, that the remainder may be devoted to idleness or luxury; but if we gather our daily portion for *six* days, then the Lord *gives* us a double portion on the *sixth*, that we may *rest* on the sabbath, and enjoy the fruit of our labour.

Although continually under the Divine Providence, yet in the states of infancy, of childhood, and of youth, we are, it may be said, more immediately under the care of others than of ourselves; and during that period, if parents are not negligent, we should hope that remains are daily stored up for the children; but the states from youth to manhood appear to be the most dangerous time of human life. Emerging from the shackles, (as they term it) of parents and friends, the hereditary corruptions of the natural man, then manifest themselves

with increasing strength ; and if this omer of heavenly food is neglected to be gathered—this daily provision obtained, young men close up the remains stored up in infancy and childhood, and rush headlong into that broad path that leadeth to destruction, which they too often continue in till some of the rough dispensations of Providence convince them, though too late, of their fatal error. “Rejoice,” therefore, “O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee, in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but *know* (saith the voice of wisdom), *know thou*, that for ALL THESE God will bring thee into judgment. Therefore remove anger from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh.”

Consider well, then, my friends, *what* you are now storing up for eternity!—Young men, just launching upon the dangerous ocean of a deceitful world, are *you* making the law of God your chief study and delight, and learning the doctrines of this holy book in order to regulate your lives and conduct thereby? Do you feel your natural inclinations rising up in rebellion against the dictates of God’s Word, and are you desirous of mortifying and subduing them?—Do you attend the worship of God at his appointed periods, in order that you may properly observe the sabbaths and reverence his sanctuary; that you may receive real spiritual food—the body and blood, the goodness and truth of that God who bled and died for you? Then are you indeed gathering your daily portion of heavenly manna, and a tenth—a *fulness*—of that bread of life, which if man eat he shall live for ever.

But you, who are daily bowing down to the idols of self, the world, and sensuality—who take not the name of God into your lips but with irreverence and mockery—who profane the sabbath by devoting it to *any* purpose rather than that of religion;—you who by your daily conduct dishonour the God who made you, and the parent who gave you birth—who give your strength to the harlot, and your ways to that which destroyeth the soul—*you*, who murder the short space of time allotted you to prepare for eternity;—what are *you* storing up against that dreadful day of eternity, when your Book of Life shall be opened in the face of heaven, and all your past transactions blazoned to public view? What oblations, what prayers, what sincere desires, what “longings after immortality,” or cravings after

celestial purity, will *you* then have to bring out from the Holy of Holies, and offer up as a memorial before your God?

Attend, therefore, in the season of health, to the voice of wisdom! "Remember *now* thy Creator, in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, or ever the silver chord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken." Suffer not a day to pass without gathering your portion of manna *here* whilst in your state of probation; that the Lord having *proved* you to be obedient to his divine law on earth, in the reception of an *omer*; He may elevate you to the heavenly regions, when you will receive your fulness of the true manna, and enjoy the sabbath of celestial rest and blessedness!

Time will only permit us just to observe, in conclusion, that as Remains are principally stored up in states of infancy and childhood, we who are parents, and receive the heavenly doctrines which open and explain the nature and utility of these Remains, must be inexcusable, if we are not particularly attentive to instruct our children in the way to eternal life—to teach them early those precepts and that conduct which induce states of love, piety, humility, and devotion, by which the remnants of goodness may be increased and stored up. It is to the *rising* generation we must look and commit the full establishment of the Lord's New Church; but it is *our* duty to train them up in the right way—"to rear the tender thought, and teach the young idea *how* to shoot;" that so "our sons may be as plantations grown up in their youth, and our daughters as corners cut out in the form of a temple." Then "the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come and say, Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: For the law shall go forth from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off, and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks: Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, and none shall make afraid: For the mouth of the Lord of Hosts hath spoken it."

Additional Discourses.

II.

PREACHED ON THE EVENING OF THE DAY OF
THE WRITER'S ORDINATION,

MARCH 31, 1805.

Jeremiah, i. 6.

*Then said I, Ah ! Lord God, Behold I cannot speak, for I am
a child.*

It has been my most ardent prayer, that if ever I should be ordained a Minister, to preach the glad tidings of salvation by Jesus Christ, our only God and Saviour, I might be brought into that state of humility described in the words of our text as being the state of the prophet—that I might be prevented from going forth in my own proprium—“not trusting in my bow or in my sword, but having my boast in the Lord all the day long.” For however willing I might be to *go*, I likewise felt the necessity of being *sent*; that is, that my will and my understanding might both be brought in obedience to the will of the LORD!

But, alas ! notwithstanding it is so very desirable to attain to this child-like state, we shall all find, from experience, that it is not so easily to be accomplished. Man’s own proprium—our self-derived wisdom, is unwilling to submit to the humiliating process; and the thick darkness of our own evil hearts prevents the irradiating beams of celestial glory from illuminating our minds, though it is by that illumination alone we are enabled to discover, that “our *own* righteousness is as filthy rags,” for that all the good and all the truth which we have or can possess, is of and from the Lord alone !

Yet, my friends, difficult as it may seem, this state of inanition—this total renunciation of self, and becoming as little

children, must be *our* state, if we ever wish to enter the blessed regions of our God, for of *such* is the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, when I stand here as the Minister of JEHOVAH, clothed in the priest's garments, representing this Most Holy Word in its fulness, and under the solemn obligation of ministering to you in holy things:—When I consider all this, and reflect upon my own *nothingness*; I blush to lift up my eyes to heaven; and though in respect to my regenerate state the spirit of the Lord may be but just moving upon the face of the waters, yet am I compelled to take up the language of a more exalted state, and to cry out with the inspired prophet, “Ah Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child.” Put, I pray Thee, Thy words into my mouth and teach me what I shall speak.

Although the *particular* order of regeneration is various with men, according to the peculiar nature and temper of each, yet the *general* progressions thereof are beautifully described in various parts of the holy Word; but no where, perhaps, in a more plain and connected a series than in this chapter, where under the letter of Jeremiah's ordination to the prophetic office, is shewn that the Lord Himself would be born, in order that He might teach all men divine truth, and that from His divine principle He would teach the truths and goods of the church and destroy the falses and evils; likewise the progress of man's regeneration from the first embryo of the new birth to his full growth as a celestial man, when he should be set over nations and over kingdoms, *i. e.* to root out, to pull down, to destroy, and throw down all the falses and evils of his proprium, and to build and plant truths and goodesses in their place. The passage runs thus: “Then the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee: I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah! Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, say not I am a child; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces, for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord. Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put My words in thy mouth. See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root

out, to pull down, to destroy, and to throw down, to build and to plant."

We may observe here, that the Lord brings us through certain stages of regeneration before we are conscious that the Lord has any thing to do with us—"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest out of the womb, I sanctified thee;" And when the Word of the Lord is *come* to us, or when we are enabled to see that the Lord is effecting our regeneration, we are directed and encouraged to persevere, and pursue our course through other states, by a promise of divine support, until we attain to the light both of celestial intelligence and wisdom, and obtain power over every evil and false of the rebellious principles.

Whilst we are ignorantly and imperceptibly led of the Lord, we quietly suffer ourselves to be brought through the first progressive stages; nay we hasten these stages, because we vainly imagine it is our *own* will and our *own* strength which effects them, and therefore do not oppose the Lord's operations; but when "the Word of the Lord *comes* unto us"—when the voice of Divine Truth informs us that it is the Lord's Providence which knew and formed us even in the embryo of the new birth, and which has sanctified those remains which have been closed up by infinite Wisdom;—and when this Word further directs us, as it did Abram, "to leave our kindred, our country and our father's house;" or like the young man in the gospel, to sell all that we have, and follow Christ—we then begin to have our doubts and fears; and on a view of the work to which the Lord has ordained us, we cry out, with the prophet, "Ah! Lord God, Behold I cannot speak, for I am a child." For there are two periods of the regenerate life in which the words of our text are peculiarly applicable. There is a very material difference in the spiritual state, betwixt man acting *from* himself and *as* of himself but from the Lord: The former he does willingly; but it is some time before he does the latter; and when the Lord first appears to him as He did to Moses, and says, "Come now, and I will *send* thee to Pharaoh," then he begins to make excuses: He is a child; he cannot speak.—"Who am *I* that *I* should go unto Pharaoh, and that *I* should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? *I* am not eloquent, neither heretofore nor since Thou hast spoken unto Thy servant; but *I* am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue!" But when from

experience and conviction man is truly aware of his own weakness ; when an interior view of his accumulated evils and imperfections is presented before him ; and when from the dangers, the difficulties, and trials he has already passed through, he dreads the combat of further temptations ; when he is directed by the Lord to *go on*, though like the Israelites at the Red Sea, he can see nothing but

“ Foes behind and seas before,”

for that he must yet subdue nations and kingdoms, when in *this* state he cries out “ Ah ! Lord God, Behold I cannot speak, for I am a child ;” it is then the language of submission and humility—it is the motto of conquest over our own proprium—and the earnest of that celestial state of rest, in which we shall not speak or act from ourselves, but when the Lord will put *His* words into our mouths ; when He will set us over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, to pull down, to destroy, and to throw down, to build and to plant.

When the Scripture, in such a variety of instances, describe the regeneration of man as a progressive work, comparing it to a journey, to the seasons of the year, to the hours of a day, to the growth and birth of a child, &c., it is surprising that the christian churches could have fallen into so great an error as that of supposing it to be an *instantaneous* work ; but this error has doubtless arisen from supposing the state here described by the prophet, as that when the Word of the Lord first *came* to him, which is a state of conviction or conversion only to be that of complete regeneration. And indeed so little is the work and process of regeneration understood at this day, that very “ few know how man is brought to that state of true wisdom by which he is constituted a Man—an Angel ; for even intelligence is not wisdom, but only leadeth to wisdom ; for to *understand* what is true and good, is not to be true and good, but to be *wise* is to be true and good : Wisdom is predicated only of life, and has relation to the quality thereof in man : he is introduced to wisdom or life by learning and knowing, or by sciences and knowledges : There are appertaining to every man two parts, will and understanding ; the will is the primary part, the understanding is the secondary part ; for man’s life after death is according to his will-part, not according to his intellectual : The will in man is formed by the Lord from in-

fancy to childhood, which is effected by the insinuation of innocence and charity towards parents, nurses, and play-mates, and by several other things of which man is ignorant, which are celestial; and unless such celestial things were first insinuated in man during infancy and childhood, he would by no means be in a capacity of becoming a man;—*Thus is formed the first plane.*

“But inasmuch as man is not man unless he be also endued with understanding, will alone not constituting man, but understanding with will; and whereas understanding cannot be procured except by sciences and knowledges, therefore he is from his childhood initiated in sciences and knowledges; *thus is formed another plane.*”

Mention is frequently made in the Writings of our church of man being in a *capacity* of being regenerated; for “when the intellectual part is instructed in sciences and knowledges, especially in the knowledges of truth and goodness, then first man is in a *capacity* of being regenerated; and during his regeneration, truths and goodnesses from the Lord are, by means of knowledges, implanted in the celestial things with which he was gifted by the Lord from infancy, so that his intellectual things make one with his celestial things, and when these things are thus joined together by the Lord, then man is gifted with charity, and begins to act from that principle, as a principle of conscience, and thus first he receives new life, and this by degrees; the light of this new life is called wisdom, which then is the ruling principle of action, and is exalted above intelligence: *thus is formed a third plane.* And man being rendered such in the life of the body, is continually perfected in another life.”—*Arc. 1555.*

Thus, my friends, we see that our regeneration or our attainment to the celestial state, is not the work of a moment, or the labour of a day; but it is a gradual, a progressive work, and must be effected by our wills and understandings—our proprium or self-hood, being given up wholly to the Lord—by becoming as little children, that He may lead us!

But is it necessary that we should attain the *celestial* state? Cannot we attain the spiritual degree of regeneration only, and be happy without so much difficulty? My brethren, the Lord’s *New Church* is to be a *celestial* church, therefore its real internal members must be regenerated as to the celestial degree.

Those who are only spiritually regenerated may be *of* the church, but not *in* the church; at least it appears so from the example of former times, since we are told that not those who became only spiritual, but those who from being spiritual became celestial, constituted the Most Ancient Church. The one is an image, the latter is a likeness of the Lord.

Let us then, my brethren, at least endeavour to be what we profess. Since we acknowledge that the Word of the Lord is come to us, let us imitate the prophet's example, and humbly acknowledge that we cannot speak, because we are but children. Then will the Lord not only put His words into our mouths; but He will be with us to deliver us in every state, and finally bring us to Himself.

But, my friends, having seen, in a small degree, what is the internal signification of this passage in the Word of God, and how it applies to our spiritual and regenerate state, let us make a further use of it, by applying it to the solemn ordinance which we have this day been so very materially concerned in.

With your approbation, and by your recommendation, the important rite of Ordination to the Priest's Office has just been conferred on one whom you have chosen to minister to you in holy things. Have we all, therefore, seriously considered the importance of the work, and the mutual engagement we have entered into? Did we begin the day with a prayer similar to that which Nehemiah offered up to the Lord before he went in with his petition to Artaxerxes:—"O Lord, I beseech Thee, let now Thine ear be attentive to the prayer of Thy servant, and to the prayer of Thy servants, who desire to fear Thy name; and prosper I pray Thee Thy servant *this day*, and grant him mercy?" If so, the Lord will doubtless grant our petitions.

But Jeremiah was not ordained to be a teacher, or a prophet, until the *Word of the Lord* came unto him for that purpose. The apostles were directed not to go forth and preach the kingdom until they were endued with power from 'on high. And our Lord Himself did not enter into His ministry till He was thirty years old, and had passed through a state of violent temptations. But so little do we know of our own real states —so apt is our own proprium to "assume a virtue it hath not attained," that we should do well always to suspect it. But if the *Word of the Lord* is now come to us,—if by the laying on

of hands your minister has been this day endued with spiritual influence,—and if the trials and temptations he has endured are such as tend to qualify him in some degree to preach to others from his own experience; then will he, as directed in the solemnity of this morning, be “diligent to instruct, patient to endure, faithful to reprove, and sincere in his ministry.” And will you, my brethren, be equally attentive to hear, diligent to obey, patient to bear reproof, and sincere in your attendance upon his ministry? If the Word of the Lord comes to you through the medium of your minister, and applies to your particular states, will you, though it be the word of reproof, patiently receive and obey it. For thus doth the Lord now say to the ministers of His church, as he did to the prophet Ezekiel:—“O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the Word at My mouth, and warn them from Me. When I say to the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thy hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul.”

Let us, then, earnestly endeavour to cultivate that mutual communication, love and charity with each other, that will tend to unite us together as the Lord’s true flock; for according to the Word of the Lord, “Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them, and they, the house of Israel, My people, saith the Lord God. And ye My flock, the flock of My pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God.”

THE END.





